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PETERSON FOR JANUARY 1863, is the first of the magazines for the new year which has reached us. What with two steel plate engravings, a double-page colored pattern plate, numerous wood cuts, and a choice of reading matter, Peterson leaves but little to be desired in the way of interesting and useful information. The magazine is all delighted with it, and we are all of us acquiescing in the decision. Only \$2 a year. Send to C. J. Peterson, Philadelphia.

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A BOLD DEED OF PIRACY. The community has been startled by another daring act of piracy committed upon our seaboard. The steamer Chesapeake, belonging to the line of packets running between Portland and New York, while on her regular trip from the latter city, on Sunday morning, Dec. 6th, was taken possession of by a gang of rebel buccanniers, who had gone on board as passengers. The officers and crew were overpowered, after a desperate struggle, in which the second engineer was killed and thrown overboard, and the first engineer and the first mate wounded. Eleven or twelve shots were fired at Capt. Willits. After being overpowered the captain and crew were put in irons, and the passengers were notified that they were prisoners of war to the Confederate States of America. The attack was made about twenty-nine miles west of Cape Cod, and the steamer was taken by the pirates to St. John, N. B., where the crew and passengers were sent ashore in a boat, the first vessel to be detained on board to work the engines. The vessel and freight is valued at \$180,000. The intelligence of the capture was telegraphed from St. John on Wednesday, and armed steamers were immediately dispatched from New York, Boston and Portland in pursuit. The following particulars of the affair are contained in a despatch from St. John, dated the 9th inst.

"The Chesapeake carried a crew consisting of captain, two mates, two coal passers, four men before the mast, and a steward. The capture was made during the hour of midnight, and but one watch was on deck, and but two men in the engine room. The captain had retired, and thus while they were quietly sleeping was this outrage committed. The second mate, Mr. Orie, was killed, and had charge of the engine, and in all probability met his fate through his bravery. He has been a long time in the employ of the line, and has always won the respect and esteem of his employers. He was a young man, and leaves a wife and children. Seven passengers obtained their tickets at the office. Among them was one person worth notice, Mr. Orie, who was an old sea captain, and preferred this mode of reaching Portland, on account of its being the pleasantest and cheapest.

Before she started some fifteen persons were counted on her deck, and as it is usual on this line for persons to sail without having purchased their tickets, nothing was thought of this circumstance. She left full of freight, consisting of cotton, provisions and general merchandise. She only carries about thirty tons of coal, which lasts her for round the trip, and had not more than three days' coal at the time of her capture, so the rebels cannot get very far with her. She carried two guns—six pounders—several revolvers and other firearms. It is not known whether there was any powder on board, but it is supposed there was, and was made use of, and cannot be depended upon. There was no risk and the value of the vessel is over \$50,000. It is not known whether the cargo was insured or not.

The Portland Press says the cargo of the Chesapeake was valuable. Among the large invoices were 100 bales of cotton, worth probably \$40,000, and 100 hds of sugar, worth probably \$10,000, the former owned by Mr. Skinner of Boston, and the latter owned in Quebec.

The Chesapeake is of about 500 tons burthen, some ten or twelve years old, and a very good sailer and sea boat, and carried two guns. It appears by other dispatches that the commander of the confederates, seventeen in number, was Henry Braine, and the second in command, Lieut. Parr, one of Morgan's men.

It has been ascertained that the capture of the Chesapeake was planned by confederate agents and sympathizers in St. John, and that the men were sent from that city to New York for the purpose. They went from St. John on the 3d inst. in the steamer New England to Boston. While the Chesapeake lay off St. John harbor, Capt. Parker, formerly of the privateer Restless, went on board and converted the crew and passengers into a company of the order issued by Capt. Parker. The rebel officer detached to capture the steamer.

To Lt. JOHN CHIBBON BRAINE—You are hereby ordered to proceed to the city of New York and State of New York, with the following: Lieut. H. A. Parr, 2d Lieut. David Collins, Sailing Master Geo. Robinson and crew of eleven men.

You will, on arrival there, engage passage on board the steamer, and use your own discretion as to the route to be followed to New York. Your action towards the crew and passengers will be strictly in accordance with the President's instructions.

You will, as soon as circumstances will permit, bring your prize to the island of Grand Menan for further orders—Seal Cove Harbor if possible. (Signed) JOHN PARKER, Captain C. S. Privateer Retribution.

A later despatch from Halifax, received by Col. Lester Washburn, states that the Chesapeake was at St. Mary's destitute of coal, and will undoubtedly be taken by the gunboats which have been sent in pursuit of her.

CONGRESS. The organization of the House of Representatives was completed on Tuesday last, by the election of Mr. McPherson of Pennsylvania as Clerk; Mr. Glosbrener of Pennsylvania as Sergeant-at-Arms. Mr. Goodnow was re-elected Door-keeper, and Mr. King Postmaster. A joint resolution offered by Mr. Washburn of Illinois, was unanimously adopted, expressing thanks of Congress to Maj. Gen. Grant and the officers and soldiers who have fought under him during the rebellion, and providing that the President cause a medal to be struck for Gen. Grant in the name of the people of the United States.

In the Senate the resolution was laid over, it being alleged that such hasty proceedings would afford a bad precedent.

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That portion of the message which will excite the greatest interest, is the plan submitted to Congress under which the rebel States may be restored to the Union. Whatever may be thought of the effectiveness of the method suggested to reclaim the people of the rebel States to their allegiance, the conditions imposed are neither harsh nor unreasonable. All that is required of the people of the South, in order to regain their forfeited rights under the Constitution, is to take the oath of allegiance prescribed in the proclamation accompanying the Message. The class of persons exempted from its provisions are only those who as leaders have held civil or diplomatic positions in the rebel Government, or who have left judicial stations in the United States to aid the rebellion—the rebel military or naval officers above the rank of Colonel in the army or Lieutenant in the navy—all who have left seats in Congress or resigned commissions in our army or navy to aid the rebellion—and all who have maltreated colored men or their officers in any way contrary to the usages of war. The remainder of the people of the rebel States are offered a free pardon and restoration to rights of property, except as slaves declared free by the emancipation proclamation. One-tenth of the legal voters of any State upon taking the prescribed oath of allegiance may re-organize a State Government which can at once resume its place in the Union, with the proviso, however, that it shall not interfere with the condition of colored persons made free by the emancipation proclamation, so long as it is not modified or declared void by the Supreme Court.

The door is thus opened for the reconstruction of the Union and the restoration of peace upon the only basis which, if accepted, can ensure the re-establishment of the Government in its integrity and the harmony and prosperity of the country.

AUGUSTA LECTURE. The opening lecture of the course was delivered on Thursday evening last by Wendell Phillips. His subject, "The Times," gave ample scope for the discussion of those topics of national interest which so prominently engage the public attention. The problem of slave emancipation, and the reconstruction of the Union upon the basis of free government, was the principal theme of remark, and notwithstanding the diversity of opinion among the audience—comprising every shade of political belief and disbelief—the eloquence and ability of the speaker commanded earnest and respectful attention, and were not unfrequently rewarded by lively demonstrations of applause.

The directors of the Lyceum have reason to be gratified with the auspicious inauguration of this enterprise. The hall was well filled, and the sales of tickets on the opening night were sufficiently large to ensure the successful prosecution of the winter campaign. Our citizens are under obligations to them for the efforts they have made to provide a profitable and entertaining course. On Thursday evening, the second of the course, Mr. G. S. Gage, Esq., will read a poem, entitled, "Love and War."

MILITARY ITEMS. Col. Fessenden's regiment of Veteran volunteers now in camp in this city, numbers 661 enlisted men and 36 officers—total 697.

Col. Beal's regiment numbers 700 men now in camp, in addition to the battalion of 285 in the field. This makes a total of 985 men, and brings the regiment nearly up to its maximum strength. Orders have been received for the regiment to take the field, and it is expected that it will leave in the course of two weeks, or as soon as it is supplied with the necessary arms and equipments.

The 2d Maine Cavalry, Col. Woodman, is rapidly filling up. The number mustered into the service is 654. About 200 men already enlisted are yet to be mustered in.

The number of recruits mustered into old regiments under the recent call of the regiments, as we learn from the returns at Military Headquarters in this city, is 307.

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It is estimated that the whole number of enlistments under the recent call, to be credited to the quota of the State, is nearly 3000.

The quota of Augusta is nearly filled. The number required is 115, and 105 have been enlisted, mustered in, and their bounty of \$200 paid. Only 10 men are lacking to complete the full number.

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